

"We have had a week of dark and sometimes rainy weather, with strong, very cold north winds during the last half. Yesterday and the day before I noticed an occasional Chimney Swift beating up against the wind toward the First Presbyterian Church, in the large flues of which hundreds of them congregate. This morning I found a dead one on the steps of the Normal Science Building, and a few minutes later another was brought to me. Then I began to suspect trouble, and, after getting permission, visited the church. Twenty-two were picked up on the grounds, though, I was told, several had been carried off. Probably several will reach me tomorrow. Several others were reported about town. Then I went to the basement. There are really four flues. The furnace pipe enters one of these. From the opening at the base of this I took out 1175 dead and nearly dead, and approximately 100 living birds that could fly. Of the other three flues, one contained none, another about a dozen, and the third two dozen.

Now I had taken it for granted that the cause of the tragedy was starvation, as the birds feed entirely on the wing, and few or no insects have been flying this week. The janitor's theory was that the fire built this morning (the first for two weeks) had killed them, and I must say that the location of the greater part of the dead birds seems to substantiate his theory. But what of the others in the other two flues and about the grounds and town? Driven out by heat and smoke and died of cold perhaps. Or could it be that they all or nearly all sought the warm chimney this morning and succumbed to starvation?"

In a letter Mr. Allen informed me that he had examined the alimentary canals of several of the dead Swifts, and had found them entirely empty.
HARRISON F. LEWIS, *Bergerville, P. Q.*

An Attack on Live Stock by Magpies (*Pica pica hudsonia*).— Last autumn, my friend, Mr. H. S. Betts of the Forest Service, Washington, D. C., visited the ranch of Mr. Keith Smith at Linwood, Utah. While in Madison, Mr. Betts stated that Magpies had attacked the sheep, and injured one so badly that it had to be killed. A request for detailed information, brought from Mr. Smith the following letter:

Linwood, Utah,
October 25, 1920.

"Dear Mr. Schorger:

"Referring to letter of the 16th inst., it is only in the past two years that the magpies have injured my rams and I have not heard of anyone else's stock being molested.

"Answering your questions:

"1. The wounds were always in the back, the magpie sitting there and pecking until it had opened up a small hole in the flesh. This got deeper and deeper until in one case the entrails of the ram were exposed.

2. The sheep were not wounded previous to the attack.

3. The magpies worked one at a time.

4. It is a rare occurrence as far as I know. They opened up sores on about ten out of sixty or seventy rams in the past two years.

5. They acted in a similar manner to two or three old thin cows last spring.

We treated the wounds with creolin and pine tar and tried to shoot and poison the magpies.

Yours very truly,

Keith Smith."

It is well known that Magpies are reputed to peck at sores on stock, but in this case uninjured sheep appear to have been attacked, and in one case, at least, severely. The point of greatest interest is the possible acquirement by the Magpie of the pernicious habit of the Kea Parrot.

Dr. H. C. Oberholser has kindly informed me that he is not aware of a similar occurrence.—A. W. SCHORGER, *Madison, Wisconsin.*

Strange behavior of a Bullock's Oriole.—In the early summer of 1920, a young lady, living near me, in eastern Oregon, picked up a young Bullock's Oriole, that had fallen from the nest. Though some time would have elapsed before the youngster would have begun its education under the care of its parents, there was no difficulty in rearing the bird, which soon became a recognized member of the family having the full liberty of the house. When it was several months old and had never exhibited the slightest fear of any human being, the family was surprised by its showing absolute terror, whenever its mistress entered the room dressed in a new dress, which had never been worn before in the presence of the bird. This seemed unreasonable, since it would fly for protection to any member of the family or even to strangers. After this fear had been several times exhibited and was evidently not to be treated lightly, it was suggested that a string of dark beads, which had until then been worn with the dress, might be responsible. When these were discarded the bird at once became normal and permitted its mistress the former liberties.

The sight of the beads, even if partly covered, on a dressing table, would always cause a panic. It is quite probable that the bird mistook them for a snake, in which case its fear was purely instinctive as no snake experience had ever entered the life of the youngster.—A. W. ANTHONY, *Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, Calif.*

Domesticated Ipswich Sparrows (*Passerculus princeps*).—On December 26, 1920, four friends and I visited Duxbury Beach, south of Boston, Mass. As we approached one of the gunners' "blinds," which is occupied all through the shooting season, we flushed two Ipswich Sparrows. These flew a short distance toward the blind and dropped into the beach grass. We soon overtook and flushed them again. This performance was repeated several times, until finally the birds dropped upon the nearly bare sand close to the blind and on the edge of the group of tethered